

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 17 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2, 8, 11, 14-16, 18 and 19 have been amended. Claims 2-16, 18 and 19 are pending and under consideration. Applicants assert that no new matter has been added.

II. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102(B)

On page 2, the Office Action rejected claims 1, 4, 7 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yanagida et al. (U.S. 5,775,918). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been cancelled and its features incorporated into claim 2. Claims 4 and 7 depend from claim 2. Claim 2 recites "a pixel value modification unit modifying the values of pixels located in the vicinity of the answer column" (claim 2, lines 13-14).

On page 5, lines 14-15, the Office Action conceded that Yanagida et al. is silent regarding "modifying the values of pixels in answer column" (sic). As shown above, claim 2 recites "**a pixel value modification unit modifying the values of pixels located in the vicinity of the answer column**" emphasis added. Dependent claims 4 and 7 inherit the patentable recitations of their base claims, and therefore, claims 2, 4 and 7 patentably distinguish over Yanagida et al.

Claims 14-16 recite "**accentuating pixels** located in a vicinity of each of the marks checked in any of the answer columns in the image data **by giving those pixels a color according to the detected result and the position definition information**" (emphasis added). In other words, claims 14-16 modify the values of pixels by giving them a color. Therefore, claims 14-16 patentably distinguish over Yanagida et al.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

IV. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

A. On page 5, the Office Action rejected claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Yanagida et al. in view of Lesnick et al. (U.S. 4,760,606). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

On page 5, lines 16-21, the Office Action cited Lesnick et al. as allegedly disclosing the feature of a "modification unit." This assertion is respectfully traversed.

Lesnick et al. fails to describe modifying the values of pixels as recited in the "modification unit" of claim 2, for example. Lesnick et al. merely describes a digital image processing system that *detects* a highlighted portion of a document (see for example, col. 1, lines 44-47). The detected highlighted portions of a document in Lesnick et al. are then used to identify key words within a document (e.g. a title). For example, Lesnick et al. column 8, lines 38-41 recites:

Although the particular method of highlight detection discussed below is for yellow highlight marks, the same method can be adapted to detect highlight marks of other colors

(emphasis added).

Merely detecting highlighted portions of a document, however, does not equate to actually *modifying* the pixel values in the vicinity of an answer column as described in claim 2. Accordingly, Lesnick et al. fails to describe "said image accentuation unit is a pixel value modification unit modifying the values of pixels located in the vicinity of the answer column" as recited by lines 17-18 of claim 2.

Moreover, neither Lesnick et al. nor Yanagida et al., individually or combined, disclose the feature of "simultaneously outputting the image data accentuated by said image accentuation unit and a corresponding determined intended answer for each question, on a display device to allow an operator to verify whether the corresponding determined intended answer is correct" (emphasis added) as recited in lines 15-18 of claim 2.

Accordingly, Applicants assert that claim 2 patentably distinguishes over the cited art for at least the above mentioned reasons.

Dependent claims 3, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 11 inherit the patentable recitations of their base claim, and therefore, patentably distinguish over the cited art for the reasons discussed with respect to the base claim in addition to the additional features recited therein. For example, claim 5 recites a "pixel value modification unit modifies the values of pixels **other than the pixels checked with the mark** when modifying the values of pixels located in the vicinity of the answer column" (lines 2-4, emphasis added). Neither Lesnick et al. nor Yanagida et al., individually or combined, disclose such a feature.

With respect to independent claim 18, as described above with respect to claim 2, Lesnick et al. fails to describe modifying the values of pixels. Accordingly, Lesnick et al. fails to describe "highlighting pixels in a color different from a color of the mark by modifying values of pixels located in the vicinity of the answer spaces" as recited by lines 5-6 of claim 18.

Moreover, neither Lesnick nor Yanagida, individually or combined, disclose the feature of "outputting, simultaneously, a highlighted mark and the corresponding determined intended answer to allow an operator to verify whether the determined intended answers are correct" as recited on lines 7-9 of claim 18. Accordingly, Applicants assert that claim 18 patentably distinguishes over the cited art.

Dependent claim 19 inherits the patentable recitations of its base claims, and therefore, patentably distinguishes over the cited art for the reasons discussed above in addition to the additional features recited therein.

In view of the above, applicant respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

B. On page 7, the Office Action rejected claims 10, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Yanagida et al. and further in view of Matsuno et al. (US 6,320,983 B1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that Matsuno et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Yanagida et al. described above, and therefore, dependent claims 10, 12 and 13 patentably distinguish over the cited art for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 2 from which they depend.

In view of the above, applicant respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

VI. CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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